National Code Makes Some Grill Cylinders Obsolete

PROPANE
EXCEPTIONAL ENERGY

- Every year thousands of grill cylinders are overfilled at refill centers
- An overfilled Propane tank can explode violently, because of physical damage or exposure to moderate heat
- To enhance consumer safety, the national fire protection association (NFPA) has enacted code 58-2.3.1.5, which becomes effective in 2002

(NFPA) code 58-2.3.1.5, which becomes effective April 1, 2002 states:

- All new cylinders are to be manufactured with overfill protection devices (OPDs)
- All new cylinders must be equipped with an Overfill Prevention Device (OPD) in order to be refilled by anyone. Cylinders without OPDs simply will not be refilled & encouraged to be surrendered
- Empty cylinders with round or star shaped 5-prong valve hand wheels do not contain OPDs and are obsolete. (See Photo B)

B. Valves with round or star shaped hand are obsolete.

Do you have a propane tank that was made before September 30, 1998?

A. Valves with Triangular shaped handwheels are OK.

- If you have the triangle knob, then you're fine. Otherwise you need to get a new tank. This ruling applies to all propane cylinders from 4 to 40 pounds. So most any cylinder sold for gas grills is involved.

- OPD cylinders can be identified by the unique triangular shape of the valve's hand wheel. They also have the letters "OPD" on the hand wheel and the side of the valve. (See Photo A)

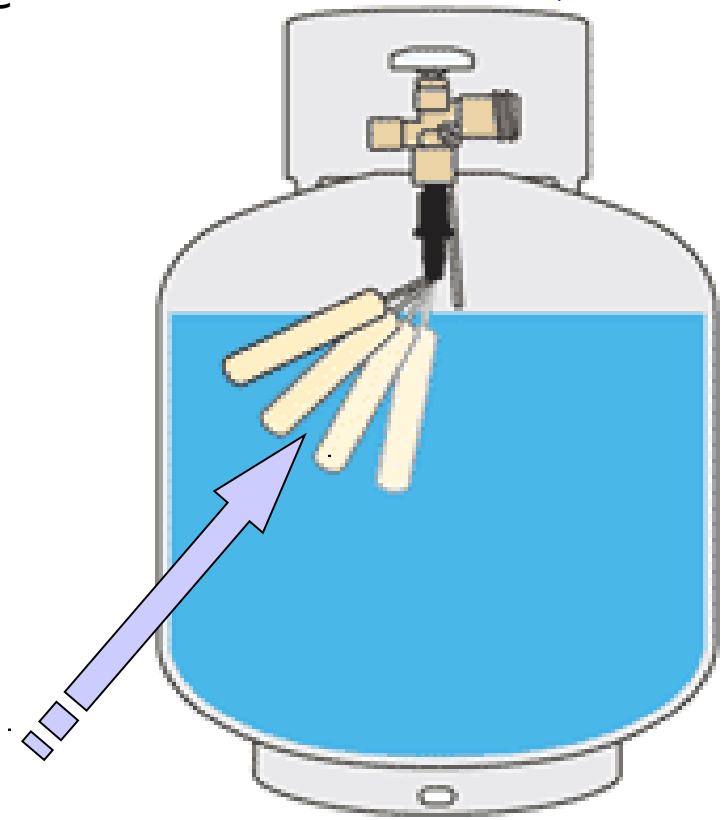
OPD What?

(Overfill Prevention Device)

- Every year it’s estimated there are over 600 fires or explosions caused by overfilled propane cylinders resulting in injuries to about 30 people

- To eliminate this problem the National Fire Prevention Agency recommended to the Consumer Product Safety Commission that they require the OPD be installed on all propane tanks

- The OPD is a special valve that has a float inside the cylinder. The specially calibrated float activates to stop the flow of gas into the cylinder before an unsafe or 80% fill level is reached



What Do I Do if My Cylinder is Obsolete?

- Your cylinder is obsolete and cannot be refilled by anyone, including refill centers

- Obsolete or damaged propane cylinders should never be abandoned or thrown in the trash. Instead, visit a cylinder exchange location, where:
  1. You can exchange your empty obsolete cylinder
  2. For a fee, you will receive a cylinder equipped with an OPD & your obsolete cylinder will be recycled or disposed of properly

- Some Dealers are trading in old tanks at no cost, others may charge a fee, which range from $10 to$20

To locate a cylinder exchange location near you:

- The cheapest way to exchange your tank is through a service like Blue Rhino or AmeriGas where they are assisting the recycling process

- These services will exchange your empty, obsolete tank with a new, filled tank for about $20. A new tank can cost $25 to $30. As mentioned earlier, old cylinders should be taken to a dealer or recycling center not simply thrown in the trash.

- Blue Rhino Exchange Program can be reached at 1-800-258-7466 or customerservice@bluerhino.com

- AmeriGas Exchange can be reached at or http://www.amerigas.com/cylinder_exchange2.htm